

Declassified and Approved 01
For Release 2011/10/31 : [REDACTED]
CIA-RDP85T00875R00160003
[REDACTED]

Declassified and Approved
For Release 2011/10/31 : [REDACTED]
CIA-RDP85T00875R00160003
[REDACTED]

~~Confidential~~

Doc/Sec



DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence Memorandum

*USSR: 1970 Census Results Indicate
Demographic Problems Are Unsolved*

~~Confidential~~

ER IM 70-80
June 1970

Copy No. 36

WARNING

This document contains information affecting the national defense of the United States, within the meaning of Title 18, sections 793 and 794, of the US Code, as amended. Its transmission or revelation of its contents to or receipt by an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

CONFIDENTIAL

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
June 1970

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

USSR:
1970 Census Results
Indicate Demographic Problems Are Unsolved

Introduction

In mid-April the Soviet Union published the first preliminary figures from the nationwide population census conducted on 15 January 1970. This was the second census since World War II and unlike the first, conducted in 1959, its results contain no major surprises. Rather, the preliminary data confirm the general conclusions of both Soviet and Western demographers that: (1) the growth rate of the total population has slowed in recent years; (2) the growth rates in the republics principally populated by Turkic language groups have far outstripped the rates in the Slavic republics; (3) the process of urbanization has continued but at a slower pace than during the 1950s; (4) the policy of freezing the size of the population in the largest cities has not been successful; (5) the large internal migrations characteristic of earlier periods have continued; and (6) the women still far outnumber the men as a consequence of World War II and earlier civil strife.

The purposes of this memorandum are (a) to present the preliminary results of the census and (b) to discuss briefly the demographic problems facing Soviet planners.

*Note: This memorandum was produced solely by CIA.
It was prepared by the Office of Economic Research.*

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Census Results

1. The recently released census results indicate that on 15 January 1970 the population of the Soviet Union was 241,748,000, or about 16% larger than that recorded in the census taken 11 years earlier.* The average annual growth rate of the population between 1959 and 1970 was 1.3%, compared with 1.7% between 1950 and 1959. The slowing of growth was especially pronounced in the latter part of the decade (1967-70), when it is estimated that the population grew at an average annual rate of only 1%.

2. The slowdown in population growth results from sharply diminished birth rates in recent years and slightly higher death rates. After changing relatively little in the 1950s, the birth rate in the USSR fell sharply from 24.9 per thousand persons in 1960 to 17.3 per thousand in 1968. The decline in the birth rate was caused both by the decrease in the number of women in the prime child-bearing ages (20-34 years) and by a decrease in the average number of children per family. The increase in the death rate, from 7.1 per thousand persons in 1960 to 7.7 per thousand in 1968, reflects the gradual "aging" of the Soviet population. In other words, a larger proportion of the population is now in the upper age groups where death rates are higher (see Table 1). As a consequence of the diverging trends in the birth and death rates, the rate of natural increase (the net addition to the population) is now only about half the rate in 1960.

3. Along with the slowdown in the overall rate of growth of the population, the census reveals a wide variation in growth by republic, ranging from 11% for the RSFSR during 1960-70 to 46% for Tadzhik (see Table 2). The sparsely settled Asian republics, which embraced only 13% of the population in 1959, accounted for nearly 34% of the increase in the population of the USSR since 1959. High birth rates

* The 1970 results were approximately 300,000, or 0.1%, larger than the total that would have been expected on the basis of the most recent official estimates. The overage may have resulted from (1) underestimating the number of births in recent years, (2) overestimating the number of deaths, (3) previous undercounting of the population, or (4) some combination of factors.

CONFIDENTIAL

Table 1

USSR: Indicators of Population Growth

	<u>Per Thousand Persons</u>									
	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1961</u>	<u>1962</u>	<u>1963</u>	<u>1964</u>	<u>1965</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1967</u>	<u>1968</u>
Birth rate	26.7	24.9	23.8	22.4	21.2	19.6	18.4	18.2	17.4	17.3
Death rate	9.7	7.1	7.2	7.5	7.2	6.9	7.3	7.3	7.6	7.7
Rate of natural increase	17.0	17.8	16.6	14.9	14.0	12.7	11.1	10.9	9.8	9.6

CONFIDENTIAL

- 3 -

CONFIDENTIAL

Table 2

USSR: Republics Ranked by Order of Population Growth for 1959-70

	Population in 1970 as a Percent of Population in 1959	Per Thousand Persons		
		Birth Rate ^{a/}	Death Rate ^{a/}	Rate of Natural Increase ^{a/}
Tadzhik	146	36.5	6.5	30.0
Uzbek	145	34.7	5.8	28.9
Turkmen	142	37.2	7.0	30.2
Kirgiz	142	31.0	6.4	24.6
Armenia	141	29.1	5.8	23.3
Kazakh	140	26.2	5.8	20.4
Azerbaijan	138	36.4	6.3	30.1
Moldavia	124	20.4	6.2	14.2
Average for the USSR	116	18.4	7.3	11.1
Georgia	116	21.0	6.9	14.1
Lithuania	115	18.1	7.9	10.2
Latvia	113	13.9	10.1	3.8
Estonia	113	14.8	10.6	4.2
Ukraine	113	15.3	7.6	7.7
Belorussia	112	17.9	6.8	11.1
RSFSR	111	15.8	7.6	8.2

a. Data for 1965 were used to represent the median for the 1959-70 period.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

and low death rates among the Turkic and Tadzhik peoples largely account for the high rates of population growth in the Asian republics during the intercensal period.*

4. Although data on nationality groups were not released with the preliminary census figures for 1970, the data published on the population distribution by republic suggest that ethnic Russians probably remain the majority nationality group in the USSR. According to the 1959 census, ethnic Russians comprised 55% of the total population. And, in 1959, 83% of the ethnic Russians lived in the RSFSR. Finally, the population of the RSFSR accounted for 56% of the total population in 1959. According to the 1970 census, the population of the RSFSR amounted to 54% of the total population. Thus, barring some massive ethnic changes by republic, ethnic Russians remain the majority nationality group, albeit a smaller majority. The Western press has ascribed some importance to the inevitable minority status of the ethnic Russians. There is no evidence, however, that Soviet authorities share this concern.

5. Soviet apathy may stem from two sources. First, although the slow rate of natural increase of ethnic Russians will result in their eventual loss of majority status, they will, nevertheless, continue to be the dominant ethnic group. In 1959, ethnic Russians outnumbered the second largest ethnic group, the Ukrainians, by three to one, and outnumbered the third largest group, the Belorussians, by fourteen to one. Moreover, through migration from the RSFSR, Russians have become a significant share of the population of all republics, in 1959 ranging from 3% in Armenia to 43% in Kazakhstan. Second, Russian hegemony results not only from their numbers but also from the unstated policy of largely reserving positions of responsibility for ethnic Russians. Under this policy, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR works

* The Asian republics include Azerbaijan, Kazakh, Kirgiz, Tadzhik, Turkmen, and Uzbek. The predominant ethnic group in all of these republics has Turkic as a common language heritage, with the exception of the Tadzhiks, and Islam as a common religious heritage.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

out lists of jobs (*nomenklatura*) which may not be filled without the consent of the party's regional committees or the republic or USSR Central Committee. This procedure was instituted in the early 1930s, and the number of jobs on such lists has been increasing steadily.

6. Migration of the population was a significant factor not only in inter-republic growth but also in intra-republic. For example, migration appears to have been a major factor in the population shifts within the RSFSR. In the remote areas of the Far East and in Eastern and Western Siberia, which have been designated as underpopulated by Soviet planners, net out-migration resulted in a virtual stagnation of population growth in the late 1960s. At the same time, in the North Caucasus, which is "overpopulated," the growth of the population has been the most rapid in the RSFSR. These trends are inverse to declared population and economic policies and are blamed on migration. Moreover, the data suggest that during the 1960s Soviet planners were overestimating the effectiveness of the policy. In several of the underpopulated areas, the actual figures for 1970 are lower than the official estimates for 1969, while planners were underestimating the number of persons in overpopulated areas.

7. The growth of the population in cities is another area that has been affected by migration. According to the census data, the urban population increased by 36 million during the intercensal period and accounted for 56% of the total population in 1970 compared with 48% in 1959 (see Table 3). Reflecting in part the overall slowdown in population growth, the rate of increase of urban areas was considerably slower during the 1960s than during the 1950s, rising at an average annual rate of 2.8% and 4.1%, respectively. Three sources contributed to the rise in urban population in the 1960s: (1) migration of rural residents to the cities accounted for approximately 45% of the growth; (2) natural increase resulting from the excess of births over deaths was responsible for about 41% of the growth; and (3) reclassification of rural population points to urban status caused 14% of the growth.

8. Contrary to policy, the rate of population growth in large cities was as fast as the rate in smaller cities. The population of cities of more

CONFIDENTIAL

Table 3

USSR: Number and Population of Cities and Towns

Size of City or Town	Number of Cities and Towns		Population (Million)	
	1959	1970	1959	1970
<i>All cities and towns</i>	4,619	5,504	100.0	136.0
Less than 3,000	843	1,122	1.6	2.1
3,000 to 5,000	904	1,024	3.6	4.1
5,000 to 10,000	1,296	1,430	9.2	10.0
10,000 to 20,000	798	920	11.2	12.7
20,000 to 50,000	474	599	14.8	18.5
50,000 to 100,000	156	188	11.0	13.0
100,000 to 500,000	123	188	24.4	38.3
More than 500,000	25	33	24.2	37.3

CONFIDENTIAL

- 7 -

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

than 500,000 inhabitants increased by 25% between 1959 and 1970, the same rate as the growth of population in all other cities. The number of cities with populations in excess of one million increased from three in 1959 to ten in 1970. The largest city, Moscow, grew from 6.0 million to 7.1 million and ranks among the ten largest urban areas in the world. Between 1959 and 1970, the population of the ten largest cities in the USSR increased from 16.7 million to 20.9 million, or by an average rate of 2.1% per year. In contrast, between 1960 and 1968 the population of the ten largest metropolitan areas in the United States increased from 43.4 million to 47.9 million, or by an average rate of 1.2% per year. During the 1960s, authorities attempted to restrict severely the growth of large cities in the USSR by requiring official authorization of new residents and by building new enterprises in the smaller cities. Articles in the Soviet press have claimed that neither policy has been effective, and this assessment is confirmed by the census data.

9. Although smaller cities generally grew no faster than the largest cities, the population increase of some smaller cities, particularly in Siberia, was of boom-town proportions. Among cities with current populations in excess of 100,000, 14 more than doubled their populations during 1960-70. The cities of Tol'yatti and Bratsk grew most rapidly. Both increased by about 250% during the intercensal period because of major new construction -- the hydroelectric dam and associated new industry at Bratsk and the Fiat automobile plant at Tol'yatti.

10. A prominent feature of the 1970 census is the continued existence of a male deficit. In 1970, males comprised only 46.1% of the total population compared with 45.0% in 1959. As a consequence of wars and civil strife, females outnumber males by 19 million in the ages over 40. Under the age of 40, there is a normal distribution of males and females. The shortage of males has caused the Soviet Union to rely on the physical labor of females in jobs normally reserved for males such as underground mining, construction, and heavy industry. To facilitate the employment of women in the 1950s, a campaign of expanding child-care centers was begun, and at the same time, coercive measures in the form of "antiparasite" laws and propaganda campaigns were introduced to induce recalcitrant individuals to take

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

jobs. During the 1960s, mechanization and the growing number of young male workers resulted in females being prohibited from working at an increasing number of heavy physical jobs. The policy that "work in the USSR is the duty ... of every able-bodied citizen" has not been relaxed, however. More than 80% of the females between 20 and 50 years of age in 1970 are employed. The male deficit will gradually "age out" of the population, but even if nothing else intercedes to distort the sex balance further, it will be well into the next century before there is an equal number of males and females.

Some Implications of the Census

11. The information released to date is only a small part of the data gathered by the 1970 census. By 1973, data are scheduled to be published in detail on the population by age, sex, educational attainment, and ethnic group. In addition, economic data gathered by the census will be released on sources of incomes, employment by occupation and by sector of the economy, and migration. These data will provide benchmarks that can be used to make projections of the future population, supply of labor, and the need for schools and public services.

12. Although the census has confirmed the slowdown in the rate of growth of the population during the 1960s, the Soviet Union is not faced with a manpower crisis. Currently, persons born during the baby-boom in the early 1950s are reaching military and work age. The number of males reaching draft age annually will average 2.3 million during 1970-74, sufficient to maintain current armed force requirements. Similarly, additions to the population of "able-bodied" age (males 16 to 59 years of age, females 16 to 54)* are probably adequate to meet current labor force requirements, and increments

* *The concept is based on the minimum nonagricultural work age (16) and the legal age at which persons become eligible for retirement (60 years for males and 55 years for females). Most of the labor force is drawn from this group, and although many persons outside it are employed, the number of persons of "able-bodied" age does provide some indication of the universe from which the work force must come.*

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

to this age group are expected to average 2.4 million annually during 1971-75, compared with 1.9 million during 1966-70 and 1.1 million from 1961 to 1965.

13. Moreover, the slowdown in the population growth rate, caused by the decline in the birth rate, provides the Soviet Union with some short-term gains as well as some long-run problems. To the degree that children constitute a smaller share of the total population, demands on the nation's resources for child-care facilities, schools, and some consumer goods are lessened. In 1965, persons under 16 years of age made up 33% of the population. By 1970 the share of youths is estimated to have fallen to 30%, and even if the current level of fertility is maintained, the share will decline to 25% by 1980. Fewer children also mean less strain on the supply of housing and facilitate the regime's efforts to get women into the labor force.

14. In the long run, however, the declining birth rate means that fewer persons will be coming of age for work and for military service. Until 1976, when those born in 1960 reach the legal minimum working age of 16, the number of persons reaching working age will increase somewhat each year. After 1976, however, the number will drop until at least 1985, causing a marked slowdown after 1980 in the annual net increase in the number of persons of working age.

15. Soviet authorities are concerned about the downward trend in the birth rate and would like to reverse it. No significant change is expected in the near future. Until the mid-1970s the number of women in the prime child-bearing ages (20 to 34 years) will remain at about the current level but will become a smaller share of the total population. Thus a reversal of the trend in the birth rate would require an increase in fertility. Yet the influences that have caused fertility to decline -- urbanization, a desire for a higher standard of living, a housing shortage, and a high rate of employment among women -- are likely to continue and perhaps even to intensify in the near future. Hence, between 1970 and 1985 the population of the USSR is expected to grow at a rate of only about 1% annually.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Conclusions

16. The population of the Soviet Union on 15 January 1970 was 241,748,000 according to the recently released preliminary data of the 1970 census. This figure confirmed the estimates of Soviet and Western demographers that the growth rate of the population had declined to about 1.3% annually during the 1960s compared with an annual rate of 1.7% during the 1950s. Sharply lower birth rates and slightly higher death rates account for the slowdown.

17. The census data indicate that population growth by region varied greatly during the 1960s. High birth rates, low death rates, and in-migration caused the population of the Asian republics to rise by more than 40% between 1959 and 1970. At the same time, low birth rates and out-migration resulted in only an 11% rise in the population of the Slavic republics.

18. The census also revealed that: (1) for the first time, as recorded by a census, urban residents outnumbered rural residents; (2) the growth of population of large cities was as fast as the growth of smaller cities, contrary to policy; and (3) in the ages over 40, females outnumbered males by 19 million largely as a consequence of losses caused by wars and civil strife.

19. The current slowdown in the rate of growth of the population provides the Soviet Union with some short-run gains. Fewer children mean a smaller share of the nation's resources have to be allocated for schools, child-care facilities, and some consumer goods. Moreover, because persons born during the baby-boom years of the early 1950s are now reaching adulthood, annual increments to the manpower pool for the labor force and the armed forces will be larger in the early 1970s than during the 1960s. However, those factors that are related to the slowdown in the birth rate in the 1960s -- urbanization, high employment rates among women, housing shortages, and the desire for a higher standard of living -- are expected to continue for the foreseeable future. As a consequence, the annual rate of population growth between 1970 and 1985 is expected to be only about 1%. Moreover, after 1976, the effects of the declining birth rates in the 1960s will be declining annual increments to the manpower pool.